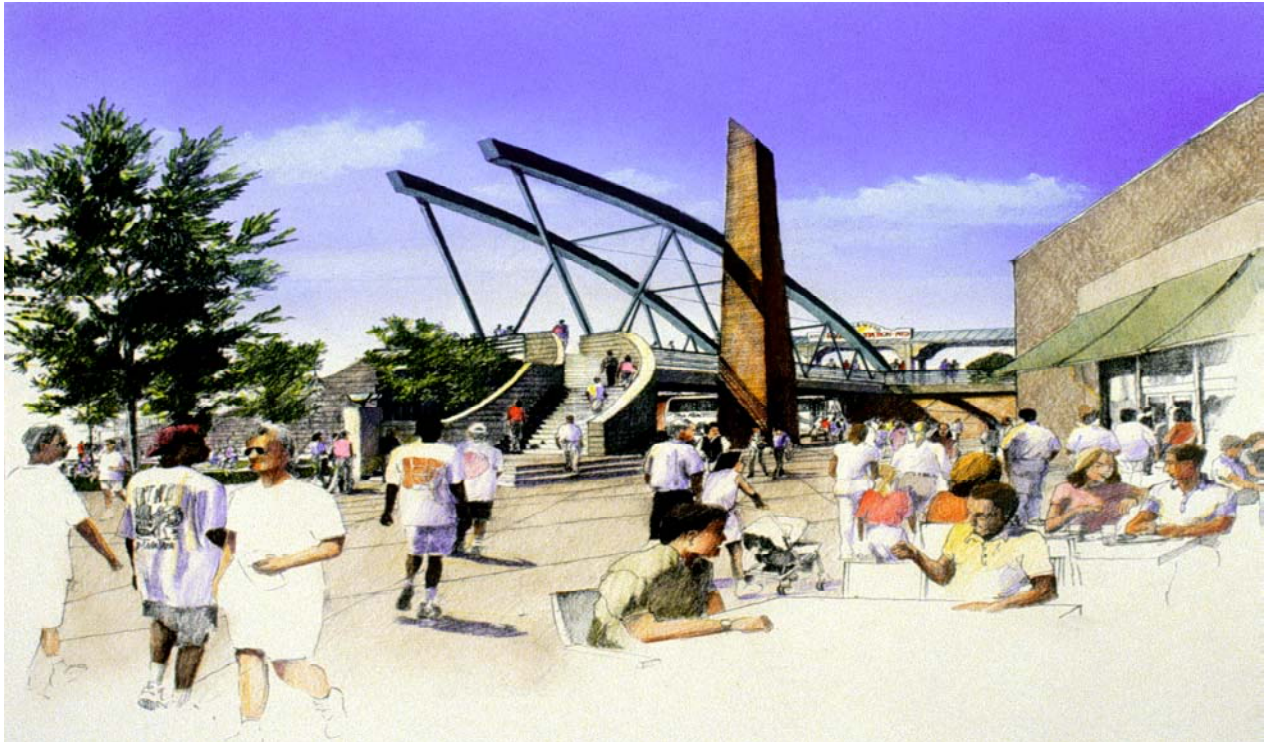


# CITYCENTER ENGLEWOOD

Englewood, Colorado

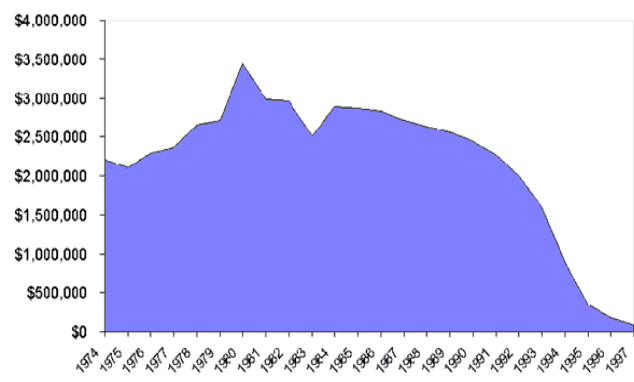


## Overview

CityCenter Englewood is among the first projects nationally to replace an enclosed, regional shopping mall with an open air, mixed use city core, or CityCenter, into the existing traditional community fabric. This 55-acre public-private project focuses development on a central public place and connects the site with walkable streets, civic and cultural uses, light rail transit station, retail and office space, apartments, a public library, outdoor performance space, and outdoor sculpture.

The former mall opened in 1968 and by 1974, accounted for 52 percent of Englewood's sales tax revenue. As suburban competition increased, retail trends shifted, and decline set in. By 1994, the mall accounted for 2.6 percent of Englewood's tax revenues before closing for good. This decline prompted the City to investigate future needs and use of the site through community planning sessions. These meetings were integral to the creation of a master plan that fulfills most community program requirements. In 1997, the City decided to examine the concepts of New Urbanism and transit-oriented

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development. The City collaborated with a private, non-profit group of local developers, landscape architects, bankers, real estate executives, planners, and attorneys who came together to help the public consider the benefits of transit-oriented development.

#### ***Development program***

CityCenter includes more than 800,000 square feet of development, with 440 residential units, 330,000 square feet of retail space, 300,000 square feet of offices, inter-modal transit station, and 50,000 square feet of restaurant space. The development recycles a former department store building into a new Civic Center that includes city offices, library, municipal courts, and a cultural arts center

The development is centered on a two-acre public piazza. At one end of the piazza is a light-rail station that opened in July 2000. A 110-foot steel truss bridge creates a ceremonial gateway into CityCenter from the light rail station and will span an eight-bay bus transfer station and carry 8,000 people daily between the light rail station and the central piazza and main street. At the base of the bridge, a double stairway flanks an outdoor amphitheater, providing performance space for music, films, dance, and community activities. Englewood Parkway, CityCenter's new "main street," terminates at the central piazza, directly on axis with the piazza fountain and Civic Center entrance.

#### ***Development Objectives***

1) Revitalize the inner suburbs - Inner suburbs now face the critical issues cities began to experience forty years ago: traffic congestion, decline of public schools, and competition for jobs, residents, and tax dollars. This issue is especially acute in Colorado, where municipalities rely on sales tax for their tax base, and there is intense intra-regional competition for retail dollars.

*Key concepts:* CityCenter builds upon the region's investment in light rail to attract new stores, services, and residents into an inner suburb. The carefully calibrated mixture of uses includes transit, the library, and cultural facilities. These should prove impervious to whims in the retail market that can quickly make redevelopment projects obsolete.



These uses support each other in the manner of traditional downtowns. Patrons of cultural events will help support retail and restaurants. Visitors who come to use city services can take care of convenience shopping. All uses share parking to reduce the overall need for paving and expensive structured parking.

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2) Replace mall footprint with a network of urban streets, parks, and pathways.

*Key concept:* The City overcame the amorphous nature of the 55-acre mall site by using Englewood's existing street grid as the framework for the new plan. This strategy integrates CityCenter into the surrounding urban structure instead of isolating it as a separate development. The use of a traditional street grid also allows for greater pedestrian comfort allowing nearby residents to walk easily to the library, city services, shopping, and cultural/entertainment events.

3) Integrate new development with light rail station and bus transfer lot

*Key concept:* A new light rail bridge will “fly” over eight bus bays and lead to civic space, performance areas, and a Museum of Outdoor Art. The bridge will create a landmark visible from the train, the Civic Center, and adjacent streets. The bus bays are immediately adjacent to the piazza and the light rail station.

4) Provide adequate parking for transit users, shopping, and civic uses

*Key concept:* By planning for “shared parking,” the City reduced the amount of parking that would normally be required for a project of this scope by nearly 500 spaces. For example, transit riders, city workers, and retail and restaurant patrons will share an 800-space structure adjacent to the light-rail tracks. The plan also provides secure bicycle parking to encourage alternatives to driving.

5) Integrate big-box retail

*Key concept:* The City worked with staff architects of a national big-box retailer to create a storefront that integrates architecturally with the rest of the site. The team additionally convinced the retailer to modify its standard parking format by allowing a street to bisect one large lot and by adding tree-lined pedestrian walkways. This strategy divides a potentially large expanse of asphalt into several smaller parking fields lined with greenery.



6) Connect CityCenter to the regional system of parks and greenways

*Key concept:* With 300 days of sunshine a year, the Denver climate is conducive to bicycle commuting. City Center includes an off-road, 10-foot-wide bike path that will connect to the extensive South Platte River Greenway trail system.



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#### 7) Include housing



*Key concept:* A residential component was seen as key to creating a CityCenter that would function as a true urban center. The majority of the housing will consist of rental units, with continuing discussions of building some for-sale townhouses or condominiums.

#### ***Conclusion***

CityCenter is the first project in Colorado and among a handful nationally to replace a suburban shopping mall with a living, breathing, mixed-use downtown. It provides a model for intelligent regional design that directs development into established cities served by transit.

The project's urban design coordinates the complex needs of a city government, regional transportation system, national retailers and homebuilders, and nonprofit cultural organizations, while transforming a single-use development served only by automobiles into a complex setting accessible by train, bus, car, bike, or foot.

CityCenter will revitalize the community spirit as well as the tax base of Englewood and a model for healthy suburban redevelopment. It resolves key issues with practical solutions that can be replicated elsewhere. The ultimate success of CityCenter will point toward a healthier and more urbane future for older suburbs in Colorado and elsewhere.